

VoIP PHONES

INTRODUCTION

The internet has revolutionised the way we communicate. In fact, it can be difficult to remember the world before it was possible to send a message anywhere in the world, in seconds, for free. Now that broadband internet connections have become common, though, it's possible to go one step further. With internet phone services such as Skype, we can now make free phone calls to anywhere in the world.

You can use Skype with a simple headset plugged into your PC, but this can feel unpleasantly like working in a call centre. There's no substitute for a proper phone handset. Fortunately, there are now dozens of Skype-compatible phones on the market. This month we've reviewed 12 devices for making phone calls online, from inexpensive USB handsets to wireless phones that don't even need a computer. However much you want to talk, we'll help you find the perfect phone.

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CHATTERING CLASS

Making free calls over the internet has never been easier, thanks to the wealth of dedicated handsets available. We take 12 VoIP phones for a test natter

Choosing a... VoIP Phone

Services that allow you to make phone calls using the internet are often known as Voice over IP, or VoIP for short. When buying a VoIP phone, your first consideration should be which service you want to use. Some VoIP services, such as Vonage, require a subscription fee and use a special box that you connect to your internet router. These services allow you to connect a standard UK phone, so we haven't covered them in this article. Other services, such as Skype, allow you to use your computer as a phone. Most internet messaging services, including those from Microsoft, Google and Yahoo!, also enable you to have voice conversations with your contacts for free.

SERVICE STATION

If you're already using one of these services, you'll want a phone that supports it. Our table on page 102 shows you which handsets can connect to which services. Almost all can use Skype, for instance, and all the wired USB handsets work well with MSN Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger and Google Talk. If you've never used a service before, check to see if your friends use a particular one. Finally, if you're starting from scratch, we recommend Skype. It's free to download, easy to use and works well with all but one of the phones here.

It enables you to call other Skype users for free, and the SkypeOut service allows you to make cheap calls to international numbers.

Most VoIP software packages work in the same way. You can use them to build a list of contacts, just like the phonebook on your mobile phone, and you simply select one to make a call. If the recipient is using the same software, it'll usually be free, but if you call a landline or mobile phone, you'll be charged. Skype's service for calling non-Skype phones is called SkypeOut, and calls cost around 1.2p per minute.

Generally, VoIP calls are good value when phoning abroad, but for local numbers your standard phone service may be cheaper. For this reason, many phones in this test allow you to choose quickly between making a Skype call and using your standard line.

HEAVY DUTY

Before you buy, it's important to consider how you'll use your phone. Several types of handset are available, and not all will be suitable for every type of user. Simple USB handsets such as Freecom's Internet Phone are the cheapest type of VoIP phone. These connect to your computer through a USB port, and they appear to the computer as a microphone and speaker. This means



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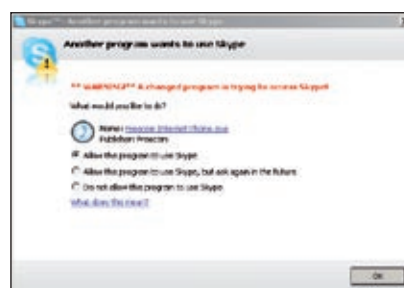


they work with almost any VoIP software. The problem with these cheap USB handsets is you're tethered to your PC when using them. As well as being physically connected to the computer, many USB handsets have no screen, so you'll need to use your PC to select and dial contacts. You'll also need to leave your PC running whenever you want to make or receive calls, so these handsets are only for occasional VoIP users.

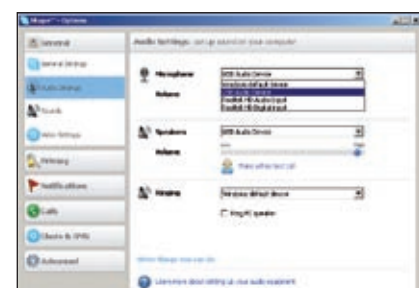
If you want to make calls more often, you should consider buying a wireless handset. With the exception of Miglia's overpriced Dialog Plus, these usually work as a standard DECT landline phone as well. This allows you to wander round your house while you talk, and to choose easily between Skype and standard landline calls. The one downside of these products is that, as with the USB handsets, you must leave your PC running whenever you make or receive a VoIP call. If your PC is loud or power-hungry, this may be an unattractive prospect.

If you plan to use VoIP a lot, think about getting a Skype phone that doesn't require a PC. These connect to your network, either using Ethernet or a WiFi connection, and can access your Skype account without any help from your PC. *Computer Shopper* has tested several WiFi handsets in the past, and they've all been disappointing, so we haven't included any in this test. Instead, we've reviewed the Dualphone 3088. This wireless phone has a base station that

Setting up Skype



Setting up a VoIP phone to work with Skype is generally easy, but there are a few things to look out for. When you install the VoIP phone's driver, it will try to access Skype. This will make Skype ask for your permission (above, left). Make sure you select "Allow



this program to use Skype". The second important option is in the Skype settings box (above, right). If your phone doesn't work, check that Skype is set to use the handset. If you can't see your phone, it might be listed as a "USB Audio Device".

connects to your router, and makes Skype and standard landline calls.

SCREENED OUT

Eight of the phones reviewed in this test include a display, but their quality and usefulness varies significantly. All the wireless DECT phones include a display that shows information such as the number you're dialling, and some are clever

enough to display the balance of your SkypeOut account, too. Only two of the corded USB handsets have a display, but as you'll be sitting next to your computer and its screen when you use them, this isn't such a big advantage. Trendnet's TVP-SP3 enables you to scroll through your Skype contacts on its small blue display, but the display on Komunikate's SE-P1K shows only the time and date.

VOIP VOICE Uconnect V901M

★★★★★

£10 inc VAT

One of the best reasons to use VoIP is its low cost, so spending lots of money on a new phone can seem annoying. Fortunately, VoIP Voice's Uconnect V901M, which Firebox.com sells as the Skype Phone Converter, is a good alternative. It lets you connect a standard phone to your PC's USB port, turning it into a USB handset.

Installation is easy, although it does annoyingly ask for permission to send marketing material to all your contacts. It plugs into a USB port, and provides sockets for connecting your phone and your standard landline. A slider switch allows you to choose between VoIP and standard calls. Like the USB handsets in this test, the V901M appears in Windows as a USB audio device, so it works with a wide range of VoIP software.

We expected the V901M's conversion process to degrade the sound quality during conversations, but this wasn't the case. In fact, during our tests the V901M's sound quality proved to be surprisingly good. When using it with a standard office phone, our testers compared its audio quality to that of the excellent Dualphone 3088. None of the numerical buttons on our phone, a standard corded unit, worked with Skype, so we were limited to using the software to dial our contacts. However, the V901M does support voice recognition for dialling contacts, and if you have a DECT phone with a display, the V901M supports caller display.

This is a simple and inexpensive way to make VoIP calls, as long as your computer and phone line are close together.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Uses your existing phone
- ✓ Sound quality is excellent
- ✗ Asks to spam your contacts

SKYPE PHONE USB interface
PART CODE V901M
SUPPLIER www.firebox.com
DETAILS www.voipvoice.com

VOIP VOICE V Traveller V653SK

★★★★★

£15 inc VAT

The VoIP Voice V Traveller V653SK is a basic USB phone handset. Its brushed metal front plate serves only to make the black plastic frame and big buttons look all the more ungainly, but the handset is light and not uncomfortable to hold. It's fairly compact, too, and with a hard plastic carry case included in the box it's a good choice for travellers who need to carry a phone to use with their notebook computer. The CD included in the box is an 8cm disc, though, which will be inconvenient for anyone who uses a slot-loading optical disc drive.

As with all the USB phones here, Windows recognises the V653SK automatically, but to get its dedicated Skype buttons working, you need to install a driver. This piece of software is small and unobtrusive, but as with the V901M's driver its installation process is annoying. During the setup it asks for your permission to send marketing offers to everyone on your Skype contact list. If you're not careful enough to decline the offer, your contacts may not be in such a good mood when you call them.

The audio quality was good in our tests, and a handily placed rocker switch on the side of the handset makes it easy to adjust the volume during a call. There's no screen, but an LED lights up to show that you have Skype voicemail or an incoming call, and you can use Wav or MP3 files as your ringtone. This is a decent, simple Skype phone, but with little niggles such as the annoying installation routine and the fact that Freecom's Internet Phone costs just £2 more, it's rather hard to recommend.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Comes with a travel case
- ✓ MP3 ringtones
- ✗ Asks to spam your contacts

SKYPE PHONE USB interface
PART CODE V653SK
SUPPLIER www.firebox.com
DETAILS www.voipvoice.com

FREECOM Internet Phone

★★★★★

£17 inc VAT



Considering that it costs less than £20 including VAT, Freecom's Internet Phone is surprisingly good looking. Its square, austere styling has won awards and it's clearly meant to be on show. The phone itself is compact and functions in a similar way to the USB handsets from US Robotics, Trendnet and Komunikate. Unlike some of its rivals it doesn't have a screen, but the Freecom has touches of flair and clever design that easily make up for this shortcoming.

The driver program allows you to configure Windows so that Skype uses the phone for its audio while other programs, such as games and media players, continue to use your main sound card and speakers. As well as the usual number pad, call and end call buttons, the phone has three function keys with shapes on them. These can be set to activate various Skype functions, such as placing somebody on hold or sending a voicemail message. It's a shame that there aren't more or better options, however. Another button calls up a list of Skype contacts on your PC, and the bold green up and down key enables you to scroll quickly through them.

During our test calls the Internet Phone produced good audio quality. It can be surprisingly loud when receiving calls, so it's a good job that there's a volume rocker switch on the side. Freecom supplies the phone with 30 minutes of SkypeOut call time, too.

If you don't mind using a handset that's tied to your computer, this is a good-value and stylish phone.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Sleek design with stand
- ✓ Good Skype integration
- ✗ No display

SKYPE PHONE USB interface
PART CODE 28031
SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk
DETAILS www.freecom.com

KOMUNIKATE SE-P1K USB LCD Hand Set

★★★

£17 inc VAT

Komunikate's SE-P1K is a wired USB handset, and is the only one of the sub-£20 phones to include an LCD screen. Unfortunately, this really doesn't have much use. It's black and white, and it can't display your Skype contacts list. Instead, it shows the time and date.

Annoyingly, the SE-P1K doesn't include a copy of Skype on its installation CD. Instead, when you click on the link labelled "install Skype", it opens your web browser and directs it to www.skype.com. The SE-P1K works with Scan Computers' own TalkScan service without a driver, though. During testing we found that its audio quality was average, and we missed having a volume control on the handset.

The handset's buttons appear similar to those of the Freecom phone, especially the way the call and end call keys straddle an up/down navigation key. The SE-P1K lacks the Freecom's extra function buttons, though, and there's no way to open Skype or view your contact list from the phone. The driver software is unremarkable and provides less control than the software included with the Freecom and US Robotics products.

While the SE-P1K doesn't work particularly well with Skype, it is compatible with the SIP protocol, unlike many of its competitors in this group. If you wanted to buy several VoIP phones to use in a small business it would be worth considering, but for home use there are far better options.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Small and light
- ✗ Clunky control software
- ✗ Display isn't very useful

SIP PHONE USB interface
PART CODE SE-P1K
SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk
DETAILS www.scan.co.uk

US ROBOTICS Skype Internet Mini Phone 9602

★★★★

£17 inc VAT

Whereas Freecom's phone has won design awards and the Siemens handset demands acknowledgment, the US Robotics Mini Phone 9602 is attention grabbing for other reasons. Its red and white colour scheme is unusual, if not necessarily unpleasant, but it looks as if it was designed to include a screen, only for this to be replaced by a big logo at the last minute.

The design oddities continue with the bank of six function keys above the numerical keypad. For some reason, the up and down keys in the middle lack any markings, while the direct Skype access, call and end call keys on either side are clearly labelled.

These quirks aside, the Mini Phone is a well-made wired USB handset. Like the Freecom Internet Phone, it has no LCD screen. On the plus side, and also like the Freecom, its setup program is clever enough to send VoIP sound to the phone without diverting all your PC's other sounds to it.

The Mini Phone's moulded back makes it feel more comfortable in the hand than the boxy Komunikate and Trendnet models. Its sound quality was above average for the phones in this group, although there's no volume switch on the handset itself. If you need to alter the audio levels, you'll need to use the Windows software. No free SkypeOut minutes are included, but you get two months of free Skype voicemail. If you don't mind selecting contacts using your computer display, this is a decent USB Skype phone, but we prefer the more stylish and similarly priced Freecom.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Simple driver and setup
- ✓ Good Skype integration
- ✗ Strange, gaudy design

SKYPE PHONE USB interface
PART CODE USR809602
SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk
DETAILS www.usr.com

TRENDNET TVP-SP3

★★★★

£21 inc VAT

Trendnet's TVP-SP3 feels suspiciously light, and it's certainly not the most attractive phone in the group. Despite its boxy design it's not uncomfortable to hold, although it is both bigger and bulkier than the US Robotics and Freecom handsets.

At £21 the TVP-SP3 costs a little more than most USB Skype handsets, but it has a useful display. Its blue monochrome LCD is similar to the one fitted to the Miglia Dialog Plus. Unlike the Dualphone 3088's display, it can't show the balance of your SkypeOut account but, unlike the Komunikate phone, its display integrates with Skype. It allows you to scroll through your Skype contacts and records of the length and recipients of previous calls. The driver software is useful, if not packed with features. It includes the usual range of volume adjustments for speaker and microphone, but lacks the niceties of the software provided with the US Robotics and Freecom phones.

In our tests we found that the TVP-SP3's sound quality when making and receiving calls was only average. In particular, we noticed that when listening to a remote caller on the handset their voice had a distinct metallic tone. A rocker switch on the side of the handset makes it easy to adjust the volume, and the front buttons include quick access keys for Skype and your contact list, but the Freecom handset has more useful specific function buttons. If you want a phone with a display, this is a decent choice, but you'll still need to keep your PC running for it to work. We recommend the cheaper Freecom handset instead.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Good Skype integration
- ✓ Useful display
- ✗ Ugly, boxy design

SKYPE PHONE USB interface
PART CODE TVP-SP3
SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk
DETAILS www.trendnet.com

PHILIPS Dual Phone VoIP 433

★★★★★

£29 inc VAT

The Philips Dual Phone VoIP 433 ticks all the right boxes. Its base station connects to your phone line and a USB port, allowing you to make wireless VoIP and landline calls with the handset. As with the Siemens and Dualphone kits, a separate charging station that requires another mains power plug is included.

The handset has a colour LCD screen, but its image quality is as you'd expect at this low price. There's no need to install any software or drivers, although you will need to download and install the latest version of Windows Live Messenger. This leads to the handset's biggest problem: it works only with Microsoft's Messenger software. If you want to use Skype or any other messenger service, you'll need to look elsewhere.

If you've got a lot of Live Messenger contacts, though, this is the phone for you. The Philips handset loads your contact list quickly, and you can sort the list by name, group or last use. The wireless handset worked perfectly no matter how far we moved around our large labs, and sound quality was good during our test calls. There's no volume control on the side of the phone, which is annoying, but there is one on the front. This is an excellent choice if you use Windows Live Messenger rather than Skype, but it's useless for anyone else.



SUMMARY

- ✓ No driver needed
- ✓ Excellent Messenger support
- ✗ Doesn't work with Skype

WINDOWS LIVE MESSENGER
PHONE USB, PSTN interfaces, 100h
standby time, 10h talk time, 120
name/number address book
PART CODE VOIP433
SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk
DETAILS www.philips.co.uk

UBIQUIO 101

★★★★★

£40 inc VAT

Ubiquio's 101 is a decent wireless Skype phone with a good number of features at a very reasonable price.

The 101 includes a cordless handset and a base station. Unlike some wireless kits, its base station doubles as a charging dock. This means there's one less power adaptor to plug in, but you'll need to locate the charger near to your phone socket. A USB dongle must be plugged into your PC to make VoIP calls, and communicates wirelessly with the handset and base station.

Setting up the phone is easy, as the handset is already paired with the base station. The handset integrates well with the Skype service, and can display your contacts and status on its screen. When dialling a number you can choose to connect through VoIP or your regular telephone service. The handset uses a digital DECT connection, but we found that its sound quality was only average.

To sell the 101 so cheaply is impressive, but Ubiquio has had to sacrifice display quality. The screen is grainy and struggles to keep up when scrolling through lists of contacts. This doesn't make the phone unusable, but it is annoying. This is a good choice if you want a cheap wireless phone that can make Skype and regular calls, but the Dualphone 3088's ability to make calls without a PC is a convenience worth paying extra for.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Cheap for a wireless handset
- ✓ Good Skype integration
- ✗ Poor display

SKYPE PHONE USB, PSTN interfaces,
100h standby time, 8h talk time, 50
name/number address book
PART CODE 101
SUPPLIER www.expansys.com
DETAILS www.ubiquio.com

MIGLIA Dialog Plus

★★

£75 inc VAT

Miglia's Dialog Plus was designed to work on Apple computers, so it supports iChat as well as Skype, but it works fine in Windows. In keeping with its Mac-based roots, the phone has a pleasant, white, curvy design. The Dialog Plus is easy to set up. The box includes an amusing warning telling the user that "to avoid possible explosion never use non-rechargeable batteries", but fortunately three non-explosive, rechargeable cells are included in the box. To charge the phone you simply connect its USB cable.

Once charged, the Dialog Plus works wirelessly. The receiver is a small dongle that connects to a USB port. Unfortunately, we had a few problems when we first installed it. The Dialog Plus receiver interfered with the USB wireless network adaptor we were using for internet access, but moving one to a USB port on the other side of the computer fixed this problem. With this done the Dialog Plus worked well. Its quoted 25m range isn't as good as the Dualphone 3088's 50m, but in practice we didn't experience any problems using the handset at a distance.

The Dialog Plus has all the buttons you'd expect from a phone, and you can scroll through your Skype contacts on the screen. The screen itself is a bright, clear, monochrome blue LCD. It updates more quickly than the screen on Ubiquio's 101, but it's a little cramped compared with the Dualphone 3088's. Sound quality was good, but again not as good as the Dualphone 3088's. This is a decent, simple Skype phone, but at £75 it's far too expensive.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Neat design
- ✗ Small display
- ✗ High price

SKYPE PHONE USB interface, 150h standby time, 15h talk time
PART CODE DLG-02
SUPPLIER www.allmacshop.co.uk
DETAILS www.miglia.com

DUALPHONE 3088

★★★★★

£90 inc VAT



The Dualphone 3088's main claim to fame is that it doesn't require a PC to run. With its red front LED, the sleek base station looks a little

like the talking car from *Knight Rider*. You connect this unit to your internet router and your phone line, and it then connects to the Skype service using your internet connection. The wireless handset has its own charging station that you can place somewhere convenient.

The Dualphone doesn't look quite as impressive as the Siemens Gigaset, but it certainly doesn't look or feel disappointing for the £90 asking price. Its colour screen is better than the Ubiquio's and as good as the one on the Siemens. Setting up Skype is impressively easy: you need only enter your name and password into the handset. This can display your SkypeOut credit balance on its screen, and supports Skype voicemail. A headphone jack on the handset allows you to connect a headset.

The Dualphone uses a digital DECT connection, and our test subjects told us that its call quality was among the best here. Firebox claims that the phone has a range of 50m, and we had no difficulty using it from the extremities of our large lab.

The only downside was that scrolling through a long list of Skype contacts takes a while, presumably because the phone downloads them from the web. Fortunately, you can skip to a particular name. With a handset that's easy to use and no need to keep your PC running all the time, the Dualphone is a great choice.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Doesn't need a PC
- ✓ Great Skype integration
- ✓ Lovely design; easy setup

SKYPE PHONE USB, PSTN interfaces, 100h standby time, 10h talk time, 200 name/number address book
PART CODE 3088
SUPPLIER www.firebox.com
DETAILS www.rtx.dk

PANASONIC 9150 DECT Phone

★★★★

£95 inc VAT

Like the more expensive Siemens Gigaset, Panasonic's 9150 is a DECT telephone with an answering machine that also supports Skype. It comprises a handset and a base unit that doubles as a charger. The handset's colour screen is one of the best in this group.

Like the Ubiquio and Siemens systems, the Panasonic base station connects to your phone line and communicates with your PC wirelessly via a USB dongle. Panasonic's dongle is bulky and blocked all four of our PC's rear USB ports. Luckily, Panasonic includes a USB extension cable.

Setting up the phone is fairly simple, but we had a few problems. The installer walks you through integrating the phone software with Skype, but Skype itself isn't included on the CD. Frustratingly, the Skype test call wouldn't work at all when we started it from the PC. We later found that all calls must be instigated from the handset. Fortunately the phone's menus are slick and easy to use.

Integration with Skype is good, but not exceptional: a one-touch button brings up your call history and contacts, but the phone doesn't display your Skype balance. Sound quality was clear and above average. This is a decent system, but the Dualphone 3088 is cheaper and doesn't require your PC to be running.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Neat design
- ✓ Good menu system
- ✗ Some setup problems

SKYPE PHONE USB, PSTN interfaces, 240h standby time, 15h talk time, 200 name/number address book
PART CODE KX-TG9150ES
SUPPLIER www.amazon.co.uk
DETAILS <http://www.panasonic.co.uk>

SIEMENS Gigaset SL565

★

£120 inc VAT

Siemens' Gigaset SL565 is both beauty and the beast. It's easily the best-looking phone in this group, but the installation procedure is long-winded and its software is horrendously overcomplicated. The set includes a handset, base station, charging dock and USB dongle. The base station connects to your phone line and power, and communicates wirelessly with the handset. The phone's charging station is remarkably elegant and the handset feels great, with a good colour screen.

Setting up the hardware is easy, but the software is more complicated. The installer offers a drop-down list of models to choose from, but SL565 was absent. Siemens assured us that the missing file was a one-off error and suggested downloading a driver from the Siemens website. The download didn't include a driver for the SL565 either, but we managed to make the phone work using the SL555 driver. Pairing the PC with the base station wasn't too tricky, but getting the base station to talk to the handset was taxing. The handset's navigation system is terrible, with poorly labelled buttons and obscure options, all accompanied by annoying sound effects. There's no printed manual, and the PDF documents on the CD are full of jargon.

The SL565 includes 120 minutes of SkypeOut credit, an answerphone and support for Bluetooth and SMS, but the Gigaset is too expensive and hard to set up for us to recommend.



SUMMARY

- ✓ Gorgeous design
- ✗ Poor handset menus
- ✗ Hard to install; expensive

SKYPE PHONE USB, PSTN interfaces, 250h standby time, 10h talk time, 250 vCards address book
PART CODE SL565
SUPPLIER www.currys.co.uk
DETAILS www.siemens.com/gigaset

VoIP PHONES

BUDGET BUY

MANUFACTURER	VOIP VOICE	VOIP VOICE	FREECOM	US ROBOTICS	KOMUNIKATE	TRENDNET
Model	Uconnect V901M	V Traveller V653SK	Internet Phone	SKYPE Internet Mini Phone 9602	SE-P1K USB LCD Hand Set	TVP-SP3
Rating	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★
SERVICE SUPPORT						
Landline	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
SIP	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Skype	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MSN Messenger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yahoo! Messenger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Google Talk	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PHYSICAL						
Wireless	No	No	No	No	No	No
Display	None	None	None	None	Monochrome	Monochrome
Interfaces	USB	USB	USB	USB	USB	USB
Power	Via USB	Via USB	Via USB	Via USB	Via USB	Via USB
Standby time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Talk time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FEATURES						
Phone book	No	No	No	No	No	No
Speaker phone	N/A	No	No	No	No	No
Answerphone	N/A	No	No	No	No	No
DECT compatible	N/A	No	No	No	No	No
Software included	Skype 1.4	Skype 1.4	Skype 2.5	Skype 2.5	None	Skype 2.5
Extras	None	Travel case	Stand	None	None	None
BUYING INFORMATION						
Price including VAT	£10	£15	£17	£17	£17	£21
Supplier	www.firebox.com	www.firebox.com	www.scan.co.uk	www.scan.co.uk	www.scan.co.uk	www.scan.co.uk
Details	www.voipvoice.com	www.voipvoice.com	www.freecom.com	www.usr.com	www.scan.co.uk	www.trendnet.com
Part code	V901M	V653SK	28031	USR809602	SE-P1K	TVP-SP3

BEST BUY

MANUFACTURER	PHILIPS	UBIQUIO	MIGLIA	DUALPHONE	PANASONIC	SIEMENS
Model	Dual Phone VoIP 433	101	Dialog Plus	3088	9150 DECT Phone	Gigaset SL565
Rating	★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★	★
SERVICE SUPPORT						
Landline	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
SIP	No	No	No	No	No	No
Skype	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MSN Messenger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yahoo! Messenger	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Google Talk	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PHYSICAL						
Wireless	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Display	Colour	Colour	Monochrome	Colour	Colour	Colour
Interfaces	USB, PSTN	USB, PSTN	USB	USB, PSTN	USB, PSTN	USB, PSTN
Power	2x mains AC	Mains AC	Rechargeable via USB	2x mains AC	Mains AC	2x mains AC
Standby time	100h	100h	150h	100h	240h	250h
Talk time	10h	8h	15h	10h	15h	10h
FEATURES						
Phone book	120 name/number	50 name/number	No	200 name/number	200 name/number	250 vCards
Speaker phone	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Answer phone	No	No	No	No	40 min	35 min
DECT compatible	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Software included	None	None	None	Skype 2.5	None	Skype 1.0
Extras	Charging cradle, 2x mains adaptor	Charging cradle, mains adaptor	None	2x mains adaptor, charging cradle	Mains adaptor	Charging cradle, 2x mains adaptor
BUYING INFORMATION						
Price including VAT	£29	£40	£75	£90	£95	£120
Supplier	www.scan.co.uk	www.expansys.com	www.allmacshop.co.uk	www.firebox.com	www.amazon.co.uk	www.currys.co.uk
Details	www.philips.co.uk	www.ubiquio.com	www.miglia.com	www.rtx.dk	www.panasonic.co.uk	www.siemens.com/gigaset
Part code	VOIP433	101	DLG-02	3088	KX-TG9150ES	SL565

Labs verdict VoIP phones

Although a few products disappointed us, most of the phones in this test were easy to set up and use. Whether you want to make the occasional free phone call or you use Skype as your main phone service, you'll find a handset to suit you here.

If you make occasional calls, and your landline phone socket is near your PC, consider the Uconnect V901M adaptor. It isn't as convenient as a proper Skype phone, but it allows you to adapt your existing

phone at a very low cost. If you'd prefer a simple, inexpensive Skype handset, though, we recommend Freecom's Internet Phone. It's small and stylish, easy to use and excellent value at just £17. It's our Budget Buy.

If you want a wireless Skype phone, and you don't mind leaving your PC running, the Ubiquio 101 works well. Its display is poor, but at just £40 it's great value. If you use Skype regularly, though, leaving your PC on can waste electricity. For this reason, we recommend the



DUALPHONE 3088

★★★★★



FREECOM Internet Phone

★★★★★



Dualphone 3088. It's easy to set up and use, and lets you make Skype calls without a PC, as well as standard calls. It's our Best Buy.